

**To:** McClain-Vanderpool, Lisa[Mcclain-Vanderpool.Lisa@epa.gov]  
**From:** Farris, Laura  
**Sent:** Sat 8/8/2015 4:21:45 PM  
**Subject:** revised SITREP text that I have so far - need to go into meeting

**Executive Summary:**

On August 5, 2015, EPA was conducting an investigation of the Gold King Mine. The intent of the investigation was to create access to the mine, assess on-going water releases from the mine to treat mine water, and assess the feasibility of further mine remediation. The plan was to excavate the loose material that had collapsed into the cave entry back to the timbering. During the excavation, the loose material gave way, opening the adit (mine tunnel) and spilling the water stored behind the collapsed material into Cement Creek, a tributary of the Animas River.

Initial estimates were that the release contained approximately one million gallons of water (estimated from the dimensions of the mine adit) that was held behind unconsolidated debris near an abandoned mine portal. There were several workers at the site at the time of the breach, all were unharmed.

The large pulse of water dissipated in about an hour. The water in Cement Creek and the Animas River in Silverton is no longer orange, and is clearing. The adit is still discharging, but is being diverted and treated before it enters Cement Creek.

We expect conditions will continue to improve in the coming hours and days. As of 7:00 am today, the leading edge of the plume was at Farmington, New Mexico???

**Revised language re: the one-million gallons:**

Mine waste water was released into Cement Creek and the Animas River. The original volume estimate was one million gallons, but EPA Region 8 is working with the US Geological Survey (USGS) to recalculate the amount based on river gage readings.

**Sampling Info**

EPA initiated a water quality sampling effort on August 5, 2015, to assess the impacts of the release at the Gold King Mine. Surface water quality samples were collected from seven locations. Two of these locations were on Cement Creek, and five of these were on the Animas River in Colorado. These locations were selected based on the fact that an historical dataset

already exists at these locations. Samples were delivered to the lab on August 6, 2015. Results were available and evaluated on August 7, 2015. These data include pH, dissolved concentrations of metals, and operational milestones, and are available on EPA OSC website.

**From:** McClain-Vanderpool, Lisa  
**Sent:** Saturday, August 08, 2015 10:09 AM  
**To:** Farris, Laura  
**Cc:** Thomi, Wendy; Chavez, Luke  
**Subject:** FW: Synopsis - GKM Release ER - please update for today?

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**From:** Chavez, Luke  
**Sent:** Friday, August 07, 2015 12:46 PM  
**To:** Faulk, Libby; McClain-Vanderpool, Lisa  
**Subject:** Synopsis - GKM Release ER

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